annum under a direct urea off-take agreement at fixed long term prices.

As per the Government's approval, the commercial production would start 35 months after the financial close of the project.

(c) and (d) The clearance of the project was for a number of reasons, including an assured supply of urea at a fixed price based on low cost preferred feedstock (natural gas) for a long term of 15 years. Further, the draft fertilizer policy envisages setting up of joint ventures in countries where natural gas is available in plenty. This project which was conceived in 1994, and forms a part of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Sultanate of Oman and the Government of India is in keeping with the objectives of the draft fertilizer policy.

Illegal Construction at Parasnath Hills, Bihar

2185. SHRI LALITBHAI MEHTA:
SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that illegal construction has been done at Parasnath Hills in Giridih District of Bihar;

(b) whether the Forest Conservation Act has been violated by some institution and illegal construction is going on;

(c) whether the Indian Forest Act, 1927; Wild Life Protection Act, 1972 and Forest Conservation Act, 1980, prohibit cutting down of trees and allow construction of a building complex and dharamshala and a place of worship at Parasnath Hills; and

(d) if so, the steps taken to stop such illegal construction and to book the culprits?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 prohibits the State Government or other authorities in making an order without the

prior approval of Central Government to use forest land for non-forestry purpose or dereservation of reserved forest, or leasing of forest land to private persons, bodies not controlled/managed by Government or clearance of naturally grown trees in a forest for the purpose of using it for reafforestation.

Since the State Government of Bihar or its authorities have not passed any order for the construction over the said forest land, it does not amount to violation of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, although provisions of other Acts including Indian Forest Act, 1927 have been violated.

As per the report of State Government as well as that of Regional Chief Conservator of Forests (Central), Bhubneswar, no illegal construction work is going on in the said area at present.

(c) Under Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, felling of any trees or other activities can be done in National Parks or Wildlife sanctuaries only if it is for the betterment of wildlife and its habitat in that area and after being so authorised by the State Government. Indian (Forest) Act, 1927 deals with forest offences such as cutting of trees, breaking of forest land etc. which have taken place without a valid permission from the competent authority. The Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 is the umbrella Act to regulate use of forest land for non-forestry activities including construction of building etc.

(d) After detection of illegal construction in the said forest land, the State Forest Department launched prosecution case, bearing No. 8(P), on 30.04.1996 against the offenders in the local Court at Giridih. Another case, bearing No. 35/96, for encroachment, was also booked by the State Forest Department against the offenders. A case, bearing No. 12(P) has also been booked under Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 on 30.5.2000 for illegal use of generator and loudspeaker inside the sanctuary area.

After inspection of the site by an Officer of the Regional Office of this Ministry (situated at Bhubneswar), on 8th June, 2000; the generator and loudspeaker was removed from the site. It is reported by the State Government that action has been initiated under Bihar Public Land Encroachment Act for final vacation of the said

encroachment. The State Government has been further directed to ensure that action is taken in all cases of violation of forest Acts as per the law and no further illegal construction is carried out in the forest area.

Environmental Clearance for Upper Krishna Projects

2186. SHRI K. C. KONDAIAH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Karnataka Government has requested the Central Government to give environmental clearance to Stage-I, Phase III and Stage II of Upper Krishna Projects, including the 1,100 MW power project;

(b) if so, the steps taken so far by Government to give clearance; and

(c) whether Government would take steps to give early clearance since the Power Ministry has given techno-economic clearance?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. This Ministry has already accorded environemental clearance to Upper Krishna project, Stage-I, Phase III. Proposal in respect of Upper Krishna project stage-II and Almatti Dam Power house and Narayanpur—Tamankal Cascade power house schemes were considered by the Expert Committee for River valley and Hydroelectric proejcts at its meeting held on 21st July, 2000. The Expert Committee has sought certain additional information and also proposed a site visit.

(c) Decision on the proposals for environmental clearance is taken within ninety (90) days of receipt of complete information.